

moment when we regard any commonest day as unimportant, when we suppose it is of no consequence how we live, what we do, what we say, whom we meet, that day. There is not an hour we live which does not have its influence on all the remainder of our life to its close, and upon eternity. There is not a moment in which something may not happen that will change everything for us. Any day may be doomsday.

Yet the first day of the new year always seems to have special significance. It is a new beginning. The past has not been satisfactory. There are things in it which we are ashamed of. Now we seem to be at a point where we can cut ourselves off from those spoiled days and begin again. So we make good resolutions and start anew.

One of the elements in all new-year life should be hope. No matter what lies behind, how imperfect and blotted the past and full of failure, we have now a new opportunity. "What is defeat?" asked Wendell Phillips. "Nothing but an education; nothing but the first steps to something better." Pupils always waste material before they are able to do beautiful work. The child spoils many pages of white paper in learning to write fairly. The artist spoils many a piece of canvas before he can paint a picture which is worthy to be seen. We should not vex ourselves if our first efforts in living are failures. Having learned by experience we are ready now to do better. We should begin anew without the slightest feeling of discouragement over our past. Discouragement is a chain dragging at one's feet, impeding one's progress. Hope breaks every chain, makes one free, and changes burdens into wings.

Another of the elements in a propitious new year must be readiness for hard work. Want of energy is one of the most fruitful causes of failure in life. Nothing worth while can be attained easily. The young man who is in quest of a good time, with short hours, light tasks, no struggles, and other people to do the hard things for him, will not realize the dreams he is cherishing. We cannot dream ourselves into anything that is either beautiful or good; we must hew our dreams out of the hard rock with pick and hammer. There is nothing for the self-indulgent but miserable failure.

Thousands of young people are now in school, or preparing in other ways for their life work. Wise men are telling us these days that the secret of nearly all failures in business life may be traced to lack of thoroughness in preparation. Men do not rise above their starting place because they do not master their work. They are content to get thru the day watching the clock, and dropping everything the moment the closing hours comes. They have no real interest in what they are doing. The result is, they never get any higher. They blame it on their employers—there is no chance for promotion, they say. The trouble is, they do not make themselves ready for promotion.

The new year should call young people to thoroughness in preparation. Preparation is everything. It makes you ready to enter the gates of opportunity which are always opening in life's paths.

A further essential element in a good new year is character. Continually even brilliant genius fails because men are not good. No true and permanent prosperity can be won by those who disregard the moral law. They tell us that gambling has become almost a universal vice. Dishonesty and untruthfulness are quite as common. Young men who carry these, or other wrong things, into the new year need not hope for anything good. The only way to attain true success is God's way. "Give us a man," said Dean Stanley, "young or old, high or low, on whom we know we can thoroughly depend; who will stand firm when others fail; the friend faithful and true, the adviser honest and fearless, the adversary just and chivalrous; in such a one there is a fragment of the Rock of Ages." This sentence is worthy of being written in words of gold on the walls of every young man's room.

At the heart of these elements of good life for the new year must be Christ himself. Hope and energy and hard work are not enough. Morality alone is not enough. We need God. Christ alone can make us truly successful. An English preacher recently used this illustration: "Once there was a brier growing in a ditch, and there came a gardener with his spade. As he dug around it and lifted it out the brier said to itself, 'What is he doing that for? Does not he know that I am only an old worthlessness brier?' Then the gardener took it to the garden and planted it among his flowers, while the brier said, 'What a mistake he has made, planting an old brier like myself among such rose trees as these!' But the gardener came once more with his keen-edged knife, made a slit in the brier, and, as we say in England, 'budded' it with a rose, and, by and by, when summer came, lovely roses were blooming on that old brier. Then the gardener said, 'Your beauty is not due to that which came out, but to that which I put into you.'"

That is what Christ would do with each life of ours. He would put himself, his own life, into us. Then we shall be able to live worthily and beautifully and to succeed and become a blessing in the world. Christ in us will make us what we ought to be. Nothing else will.

## The Christian Life

### PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

#### SELFISHNESS

Lesson: Rom. 14.

#### I. Its Various Forms.

1. I'm not responsible for the welfare of anyone else, Gen. 4:9.
2. I will not help him because it will make me too much trouble, Prov. 24:11.
3. If I can't use this, I won't let any one else, Ex. 34:18.

4. My house and interests first, then God's house and interests, Hag. 1:4, 9, 10.
5. In eating and drinking, Zech. 7:6; I Cor. 10:31.
6. In the matters of friendship, Luke 6:32.
7. In the Christian life, Rom. 15:1-3.
8. In business life, I Cor. 10:24; Phil. 2:4, 21.
9. In the matter of bearing each other's burdens, Gal. 6:2.
10. In the matter of helping the needy, Jas. 2:15; I John 3:17.

#### II. Remarks.

1. Selfishness is one of the most common sins.
2. Many people don't know it is a sin and the parent of so many other sins, such as covetousness, hardness of heart, greed, and even theft.
3. Let us all be careful that we do not become selfish.

J. L. GILLIN.

#### My Lord and I

(Sung in the rocks and caves of France during the fierce persecution of the Huguenots, some three hundred years ago.)

I have a friend, so precious,  
So very dear to me,  
He loves me with such tender love,  
He loves so faithfully.  
I could not live apart from Him,  
I love to feel Him nigh,  
And so we dwell together,  
My Lord and I.

Sometimes I'm faint and weary,  
He knows that I am weak,  
And as He bids me lean on Him,  
His help I gladly seek.  
He leads me in the paths of light,  
Beneath a sunny sky;  
And so we walk together,  
My Lord and I.

I tell Him all my sorrows,  
I tell Him all my joys,  
I tell Him all that pleases me,  
I tell Him what annoys.  
He tells me what I ought to do,  
He tells me what to try,  
And so we walk together,  
My Lord and I.

He knows how I am longing  
Some weary soul to win,  
And so he bids me go and speak  
The loving words for Him.  
He bids me tell His wondrous love,  
And why He came to die,  
And so we work together,  
My Lord and I.

I have His yoke upon me,  
And easy 'tis to bear;  
In the burden which he carries  
I gladly take a share.  
For then it is my happiness  
To have him always nigh—  
We bear the yoke together,  
My Lord and I.

—New York Observer.

#### "Joy Cometh in the Morning"

Mrs. M. A. Holt, in Christian Work.

"Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning." These are the words of the Bible, and so must be true. But they do not tell how deep the joy is—how abounding and how far-reaching. We that have tasted it sometimes may judge the best. The joy that Christ gave us is always sweet, deep, copious, and far-reaching. He never stints in measure or quality. He gives joy just as he gives sunshine, dew, and rain, which touch every leaf, every spire of grass and every little flower.

But we appreciate it more after the long,